

Message Text

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TO ALL NATO CAPITALS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM OTTAWA DATED JUNE 18, 1974 SENT
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SUBJECT: NATO MIN OTTAWA: STATEMENT OF HONORARY PRESIDENT
OF NAC, UK FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN, AT OPENING
SESSION JUNE 18.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT OF THE HONORARY PRESIDENT OF
THE NATO COUNCIL, UK FOREIGN SECRETARY CALAGHAN, AT THE
OPENING SESSION OF THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING IN OTTAWA,
JUNE 18:

BEGIN QUOTE

MR. PRIME MINISTER, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, LADIES AND
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GENTLEMAN.

IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE TO BE INVITED TO BE THE HONORARY CHAIRMAN AT THIS MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL IN OTTAWA, AN OCCASION WHICH MARKS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALLIANCE.

I AM ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR THIS HONOUR AS IT WAS MY GREAT PREDECESSOR ERNEST BEVIN WHO SIGNED THE ORIGINAL TREATY ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN 1949.

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED A GREAT DEAL SINCE THOSE DAYS. THEN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAD BARELY BEGUN TO RECOVER FROM THE SECOND WORLD WAR. THEY WERE CRITICALLY DEPENDENT ON THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT OF NORTH AMERICA AND ESPECIALLY OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE 1950S UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY SAW THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF WESTERN EUROPE AND THE 1960S WITNESSED THE GROWING SENSE OF CONFIDENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE AMONG THE EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF NATO.

BUT PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THIS WE BEGAN TO TAKE THE ALLIANCE FOR GRANTED, AND WE HAVE HAD OUR MOMENTS OF DIFFICULTY AND INDEED DISSENSION.

THIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESTATE TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICAN AND OF EUROPE OUR RENEWED BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALLIANCE AS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR DEFENCE AND SECURITY POLICIES. IT PROVIDES A SECURE BASE FROM WHICH THE MEMBER COUNTRIES ARE ABLE TO EMBARK UPON POLICIES FOR RELAXING INTERNATIONAL TENSION. SECURITY IS THE ONLY BASIS FOR DETENTE.

IT IS OUR UNITY OF PURPOSE WHICH HAS ENABLED US TO BEGIN AN ERA OF ENGAGEMENT AND NEGOTIATION WITH THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE.

35 NATIONS IN ALL ARE ENGAGED IN THIS PROCESS OF BUILDING A PEACEFUL WORLD FOR OUR PEOPLES BY STRENGTHENING CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THE NATIONS OF EAST AND WEST.
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WE INTEND THAT THIS PROCESS SHALL CONTINUE AND BE SUCCESSFUL. WE ALL REALIZE THE DIFFICULTIES OF OVERCOMING YEARS OF MISTRUST AND SUSPICION.

WE HAVE ALL ENTERED ON THESE TALKS IN A REALISTIC FRAME OF MIND. THEY WILL NOT FAIL BECAUSE OF OUR SCEPTICISM, OR BECAUSE OF MISPLACED OPTIMISM.

THERE ARE STILL DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME BEFORE WE SHALL BE JUSTIFIED IN REGARDING THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS AS SUCCESSFUL. BUT, I BELIEVE THAT THE PROSPECTS OF ACHIEVING A BETTER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EAST AND WEST ARE BRIGHTER TODAY THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE ALLIANCE WAS FOUNDED.

THIS WILL REMAIN SO FOR AS LONG AS WE MAINTAIN OUR UNITY OF PURPOSE WHICH FLOURISHES IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF FULL CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION.

IN THIS SPIRIT I WELCOME YOU TO THIS MINISTERIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL. OTTAWA WILL BE AN HISTORIC CONFERENCE DESTINED TO GIVE A NEW IMPETUS TO THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLES AND TO PREACE. THIS IS OUR MESSAGE TO THE WORLD.

AS IS TRADITION ON THESE OCCASIONS I ADD A SPECIAL WORD OF WELCOME TO THOSE OF MY COLLEAGUES WHO, LIKE ME, ARE ATTENDING THIS COUNCIL FOR THE FIRST TIME, TO MR. BRONDUM OF DENMARK, HERR GENSCHER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, M. SAUVAGNARGUES OF FRANCE, DR. SOARES OF PORTUGAL AND MR. GUNES OF TURKEY.

I SHOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY PARTICULAR SATISFACTION, WHICH I AM SURE MY COLLEAGUES WILL SHARE, AT THE DECISION OF THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS TO PORTUGAL AND TO HER OVERSEAS TERRITORIES.

I SHOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR THANKS TO YOU MR. PRIME MINISTER, AND TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT FOR ORGANIZING THIS MEETING AND OUR APPRECIATION OF THE GENEROUS HOSPITALITY WHICH IS BEING OFFIERED TO US.

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OUR THANKS ARE ALSO DUE TO YOU, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND TO YOUR STAFF FOR ALL THE HARD WORK WHICH HAS BEEN PUT INTO THE PREPARATIONS FOR OUR MEETING.

I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR DISCUSSIONS.

END QUOTE

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